

The SWORD of the LORD

Edited by JOHN R. RICE.

"And they cried, The Sword of the Lord, and of Gideon." Judges 7:20

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Prayer And Revival

By Rev. A. C. Dixon, B. A., D. D.

What is it that brings revival? Under what conditions does it come? Is it possible for any pastor or any church that really wants a revival to have it? It seems to me the things common to all revivals, beginning with Pentecost, are prayer, preaching and conversion—the ten days of prayer before Pentecost—the preaching of the Apostle Peter on the day of Pentecost—the conversion of three thousand souls. Any sort of revival that does not result in conversions, directly or indirectly, we would hardly class as coming from Heaven.

Since God called me into the pastorate, now forty-five years ago, I confess I have sometimes been reminiscent; and, in going back over my different pastorates, have asked the question, "What brought revivals, and was there a uniform condition?"

Certainly, as before Pentecost, so before the great awakening in America, there was prayer. An all-night of prayer was held before Jonathan Edwards delivered that most powerful but alarming sermon on, "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God," when the people were so wrought upon that they took hold of the pews in front of them, feeling that they were sliding into the pit, and some demanded that he should cease. But

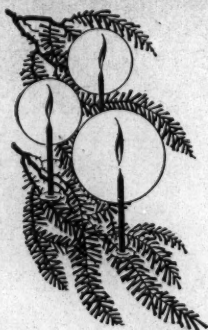
a group of people had spent the night in prayer and were sitting then at the back of the chapel in prayer, asking God to bless that sermon. It was the beginning of a great revival which swept over America like a prairie fire.

D. L. Moody Revivals Came By Prayer

Behind the revival led by D. L. Moody was not only a group of praying people, but hundreds and thousands whom he had selected all over the country and over the world, to whose representatives he wrote and with whom he kept in constant correspondence, asking them to pray for him when he entered upon any special mission.

Mr. Moody himself knew what it was to spend whole nights in prayer, and at the Northfield Conference prayer was always the dominant note. Exposition of Bible truths was kept to the front. "Deepening of the Spiritual Life" was sometimes the motto, but prayer was the chief business of these conferences. Also, in preparation for any special missions, when Mr. Moody was the preacher, he emphasized the prayer element.

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"Where Is Your Faith?"

By the late Dr. George W. Truett

"And He said unto them, Where is your faith?"—Luke 8:25.

Jesus said unto His disciples, some 1900 years ago, on the storm-swept water, when they were all affrighted and filled with dismay, "Where is your faith?" And Jesus says to a great audience of men and women assembled in Fort Worth, Tuesday evening, June 12, 1917, "Where is your faith?" This is a question that needs to be asked very often, and it needs to be faithfully answered when we ask it, for it is about the most vital matter of all, even our faith.

The conquering weapon is faith. "Without faith it is impossible to please God." His Book so tells us. "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith." We shall not have victory without faith. Of old, God's plaintive question to His Israel was: "How long will it be ere ye believe me?" And that is His question to His Israel this very hour. "O my people, how long will it be ere ye believe me?" The undoing sin of Christians is their unfaith. We are all along saying, and correctly, that the undoing sin of the unbeliever is his unfaith. "He that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God," and while he remains in that unbelief must continue to be condemned. Rejection of Christ, unbelief toward Christ—that is the undoing sin. Even so, the undoing sin for Christians is their unfaith.

Of old Israel could not enter the Promised Land because of un-

belief, and even today, and every day, God's people are kept out of many a promised land because of unbelief. We doubt God's ability, or we doubt His willingness, or both His ability and willingness, to help us, and we go our way, groping, and floundering, and failing. It is not only a pity, but it is a sin, deep and tragical, if we are not steadily growing in faith. That was a beautiful tribute Paul paid the church at Thessalonica when he said: "We are bound to thank God always for you, brethren, as it is meet, because that your faith groweth exceedingly." It will not only be a misfortune, but it will be a sin, if with you and me our faith is not steadily strengthening and growing.

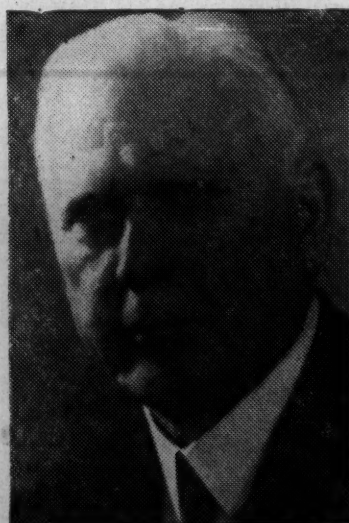
Faith May Be Misplaced

But now the fact confronts us, as pointed by the text, that our faith may be misplaced. The

faith of the disciples on that storm-swept water was evidently misplaced. They were disciples of Christ. They were His friends and followers. But their hearts failed, and their faith went down, and they fainted in spirit. Their faith was misplaced.

When is faith misplaced? I shall answer that it is misplaced when

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Dr. George W. Truett

"And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them; and they were sore afraid. And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger. And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men. And it came to pass, as the angels were gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds said one to another, Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us. And they came with haste, and found Mary, and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger. And when they had seen it, they made known abroad the saying which was told them concerning this child. And all they that heard it wondered at those things which were told them by the shepherds. But Mary kept all these things, and pondered them in her heart. And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told them."—Luke 2:8-20.

The Christmas story so takes hold on my heart that each year I want to preach about it all the following January! I want to preach about the wise men, about the believing virgin, about faithful Joseph, about the prophecies fulfilled in Christ's coming, about the annunciation, about there being no room in the inn, and about the stable birth and the manger bed. Who could ever get done

preaching about the Christmas story! But in this message let us turn aside and enjoy the first Christmas with the shepherds watching their flocks in the fields that cool spring night when the angel of the Lord brought to them the message of the Saviour! Let us hear the message and follow them as they went to see for themselves the Baby Jesus and went away with great joy!

I. The Shepherds

"And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night."—Luke 2:8.

Things went their humdrum round at Rome, the center of the world. In Caesar's palace the entertainment, the feasting, the politics continued and no one knew that God had a Son born, and man a Saviour! That night the head of Caesar rested as uneasily

as ever rests the head that wears a crown. The Roman Senate never saw an angel come and never heard a whisper of the "Glory to God in the highest" chorus. They never dreamed in Rome that the

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Merry Christmas!

With all our hearts we wish every reader of THE SWORD OF THE LORD a happy, happy Christmas. If God wills, may your loved ones be about you, may you have many tokens of affection from those you love. And may every holiday meal, every lighted Christmas tree, every greeting and gift simply say to you that God loves you, and may your heart be joyful and glad in the Lord. And if sickness, or loneliness, or poverty is your lot, then remember that you still have the greatest of all Christmas gifts—the Lord Jesus Christ; and we pray that He may be very near and infinitely precious and satisfying to you during the holiday season. Wonderful Saviour! Oh, that He may be loved and honored by all who read these lines, and that He may be served with holy joy and glad sacrifice throughout the new year.

In Jesus' name and with best wishes, yours,
John R. Rice, Editor
Bill Rice, Associate Editor
Trustees, Sword of the Lord Foundation
The Entire Sword of the Lord Staff

70,000 copies of
THE SWORD OF THE LORD
Printed this issue

28,254 Subscriptions Through December 10

By the Editor

We set out to raise the paid subscription list of THE SWORD OF THE LORD from about 50,000 to 75,000 in the present campaign. Already over 28,000 subscriptions have come in through last Saturday, December 10. Last week we had to order 68,000 papers printed to cover our total subscriptions already in, and there were about 7,000 subscriptions for whom stencils were not yet made for THE SWORD OF THE LORD. Several thousand subscriptions are expiring, which must be taken off the roll if they do not renew at once. We estimate that we ought to have 12,000 more subscriptions to guarantee a total paid circulation of 75,000 each week after all expirations are removed from our rolls.

The campaign has been a wonderful success thus far. Thank God for all of you who have sent in over 28,000 paid subscriptions during this bargain campaign!

Book Receives Great Praise

The editor's new book, *The Power of Pentecost, or the Fullness of the Spirit*, is receiving finest praise. We have room for only a few brief quotations.

DR. LEE ROBERSON, Chattanooga, writes: "It is a magnificent book... In the field of present-day religious books, *The Power of Pentecost* stands alone. It should be read and studied by every preacher and Christian

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The Shepherds' Christmas

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King of the Jews was born who will one day rule the whole world.

In the King's palace at Jerusalem the murderous Herod had no thought that only six miles away one was born who will one day make Jerusalem "the joy of the whole earth" and there will establish His reign forever on David's throne! The Sanhedrin met as usual, and the scribes, Pharisees and Sadducees, quarreled about the details of the ceremonial law. None of them had an inkling that the Christ, the Messiah so long promised, had been born. God did not think it worthwhile to tell the story of the Saviour's birth in the palaces, or universities, or among the rich and mighty of the world. When Jesus was born, the angel of the Lord left Heaven, sought out a group of humble shepherds and told them the story that should have electrified the world!

Not until the wise men from the East came seeking "The King of the Jews" and inquired of Herod and he of the scribes, did the "powers that be," in Jerusalem, hear that a Saviour had been born!

A Saviour for the lowly, the ignorant and the poor! This, surely, is the meaning of this Scripture.

The rich have more money to spend for Christmas and think they can bring happiness to their loved ones by giving diamonds or automobiles or other costly and beautiful gifts. But these things do not make Christmas. What makes Christmas is to have the Saviour. And, thank God, the poor may have Him as readily as the rich! The ignorant, the unlearned, the unsophisticated, the "lower strata of society"—the Saviour's birth was for such as these.

I remember a Christmas when we were very poor at Christmastime, during my boyhood in west Texas. My father was deeply distressed because, without money, he felt he could not give his children the things that would make them happy. After he saw us hang up our stockings in childish faith, notwithstanding his solemn warnings that there would be no gifts, in desperation my father pondered what to do. Then when we were all in bed he went out in the night, woke up the owner of the general merchandise store, and bought on credit the oranges and nuts and candy and a five-cent package of fire-crackers for every child's stocking. A blessed memory it is of his love and devotion. But he need not have put so much stress on these outward things. Thank God, Christmas was there in our hearts. We knew the Christmas story, the song of the angels; and the story of the virgin mother and her Holy Child is as sweet in a bare cottage as in a palace. Oh, when will we learn that God has His very best for the poorest and weakest in the world!

So the angel of the Lord came to the shepherds that night and there told his wondrous story. It is well for us to remember that our Saviour was born into a home of poverty. Joseph and Mary were undistinguished. Though both were of royal lineage, distantly, they had neither money nor standing that could gain them a room in the crowded inn. Mary must have been well content with a bed of straw. Her innocent Babe was wrapped in swaddling clothes, not in a beautifully stitched and expensive layette. If the Baby Jesus heard the ox munching hay, or saw the stable walls in the flickering light of a candle, or was pricked by the rough straw, He need not have been—and I am sure was not—surprised. For He had come into a world as the

humblest and weakest. Later He was to say to a prospective disciple, "The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head" (Matt. 8:20).

In this same second chapter of Luke we find how the Baby Jesus was presented in the Temple. Mary brought a sacrifice, and offering, and she must needs be content to give the sacrifice which the very poorest people give, "a pair of turtledoves, or two young pigeons." I say, Jesus was born into poverty.

He lived in obscurity in Nazareth, one of the least-known towns of Galilee, until He was thirty years old. His custom was to labor there in the carpenter shop.

Oh, blessed plan of God which provided a Saviour for the meek and lowly in heart, for those who labor and are heavy laden! He who is personified Wisdom was called by the Pharisees unlearned! He who is Creator, God Almighty, come in human form, was accused of being possessed of devils! He who had all the wealth of the world in His hands as the Creator and Sustainer of all things, died with only one seamless garment as His estate; died between two thieves and was buried in a borrowed grave!

No wonder that when Jesus told the parable of the great supper, that supper when the Father makes a wedding feast for His Son, to which all men are invited, He had the master say to his servant, "Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in hither the poor, and the maimed, and the halt, and the blind" (Luke 14:21).

No wonder we are told, "The common people heard him gladly" (Mark 12:37).

No wonder that publicans and harlots, fishermen and farmers, beggars and lepers, thronged about Him.

No wonder that a fallen girl could weep over His feet; or that a woman, twelve years with an issue of blood, could timidly reach down and touch the hem of His garment; or that the afflicted could challenge Him boldly, "Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean" (Matt. 8:2; Luke 5:12).

So when the angel came to tell of the Saviour's birth, he was sent to poor, unlearned and humble shepherds in a field watching their flocks.

Here this, laboring people! Hear this, poor people, ignorant people, little children! Jesus came to the meek and lowly in heart.

Are there rich people who would come to Jesus? Then they must be poor in spirit if they would see Him. Are there famous, learned, and important people who would come to Jesus and find a Saviour? Then they must humble themselves like a little child, for, "Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 18:3). Are there virtuous, moral people, well content with themselves for their righteousness, their church membership, their ceremonial rites, or their good deeds? Then they will never get to Jesus except they come like the poor publican, saying, "God be merciful to me a sinner" (Luke 18:13). Jesus is meek and lowly in heart.

Let this Christmastime, then, be a happy time for all who are poor, or weak, or sinful, or in trouble, for the Saviour was born just for such as you, and the proof is this—that the angel of the Lord was sent to announce the birth to these same shepherds in the field watching their flocks by night!

II. The Angels

"And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them."

and they were sore afraid."

"And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God."—Luke 2:9; 13.

First, there was one particular angel, "the angel of the Lord." Perhaps it was the same angel Gabriel who announced the conception to Mary, the same "angel of the Lord" who appeared to Joseph in a dream. Then the heavenly host appeared with him.

People who do not believe in angels can have no Christmas! The angel of the Lord was a miraculous being, a wonder-worker, bringing a message from God Himself. The Bible is a book of angels, because it is a book of the supernatural. No angels—no Saviour! No angels—no gospel! No angels—no Christianity! Those who do not believe in angels do not believe in the virgin birth, do not believe in the atoning blood, do not believe in the inspired Bible. And Christmas is not worth having without all these.

Modernists really have no Christmas, in the Bible sense. When you have Jesus born as only the son of Joseph and Mary, without any divine predictions; when you have Him live a life with no miracles and have Him die the death of a martyr but not risen bodily from the grave, not ascended up to Heaven, then you do not have Christianity! Christianity is a supernatural religion. Anybody who believes in Christ can believe that the angels came to announce His birth. Those who deny the angels deny the purity of the Lord's mother and make her a fallen Jewish girl and Jesus a bastard child. Those who do not believe in the angels make the Bible a human book, full of myths and legends and folklore and mistakes; a very good book, to be sure, but not nearly so good, the modernists and infidels think, as they themselves could write it! We had as well accept at the very beginning the fact that the birth of Christ is not worth celebrating unless we accept the implications of all the supernatural that attended His birth.

No, if Jesus is a Saviour at all, then all the miracles in connection with His birth, His life, His death, His resurrection, and His ascension are easily credible. I believe in the divine predictions of the coming Saviour's birth. I believe in His virgin conception and virgin birth, without a human father. I believe in His perfect life, His atoning, substitutionary death, His resurrection from the grave. I believe He ascended to Heaven bodily, and is coming again the same way. Hence, praise the Lord, I believe in the angels! The angel of the Lord who announced those "good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people" is as historically credible as Christopher Columbus, or George Washington, or Abraham Lincoln. That heavenly host who appeared in the bright light, which was the glory of the Lord, is as real to me as the choir of three hundred voices who sang the "Hallelujah Chorus" in a great revival campaign in Buffalo, New York, some time ago.

Angels? Why certainly there were angels when the Saviour was born.

In every household across the land and in every land where they really celebrate Christmas there is a sense of growing expectancy as Christmastime draws near. Weeks before Christmas my office force is helping me get names for a Christmas letter. I think; what shall I get for my wife? for Grace and Allan? Mary Lloyds, Chuck and their children? for Elizabeth and Walt? for Jesse Ruth? for Joanna? for Sarah Joy? or for my office workers? And months ahead of time I plan my preaching schedule so I can be home for Christmas. Once I did not get home until Christmas day, but the Christmas tree and all the presents were left intact until Daddy should arrive. I plan copy for the Christmas issue of "The Sword of the Lord" a month ahead of time. Stores get out their decorations; Christmas stocks are bought months and months in advance.

Please Mention
THE SWORD OF THE LORD
When Answering Advertisements

Dr. Bob Jones Says:

I am quoting from a letter; and if what I quote does not touch your heart and make you wish to contribute to Bob Jones University Student Loan Endowment Fund, I feel that nothing then can be said that will appeal to you.

Dear Dr. Bob, Jr., and Sr.:

We owe quite a debt to Bob Jones University. We possibly are more obligated to your wonderful school than any persons who never attended, yet gained so much.

It was through prayer that Sam Staggs allowed us to park at Kampus Kourt as non-students when I was representative of the National Exchange Club. I was such a carnal Christian I didn't know if I was saved or not. My wife, from London, was converted the week after we parked there. The week before our little girl, La Raine, was four years old, she accepted Christ without our knowing and told about it at breakfast one morning.

While there we took in many of the activities including the revival, Bible Conference, and International Child Evangelism Conference, where we were called into full-time service for our Lord.

After graduating at the C. E. F. Institute in California, we are directors of Child Evangelism in Southern Texas and Louisiana. Your students taught us to do personal work. Like Moody, I try to speak to someone each day about his soul. Today makes the 45th day without missing that the Lord has blessed my personal work with from one to five decisions for Christ. The big surprise is the large number of adults and Catholics who are turning to Christ.

We plan to spend Christmas in Ehrhardt, South Carolina, with my mother and father. However, we owe so much to Bob Jones University that we plan to go by there first.

Everywhere we go we like to give our testimony of what Bob Jones University means to us and how the Lord is put first. It does our hearts good to have

persons come up after service and say how glad they were to hear of such a university.

We will make plans for our Christmas trip to South Carolina after we learn when the university is out. Please notify us your closing date since we are eager to see our Kampus Kourt and other friends before the holidays.

Some of the young people who helped this man consecrate himself to God and helped win his wife to the Lord Jesus Christ are students in Bob Jones University because we were able to help them some in a financial way. Now, if you Christian people will help us build a million-dollar Student Loan Endowment Fund, we will be in position to help more students who are not able to help themselves, and thus train more Christian leaders and soul winners. Remember, we have about three thousand students here, and approximately one-fourth of them had to have some financial assistance in order to attend Bob Jones University. These young people whom we are assisting financially will go out into the world after they finish their education and will put back into the institution the money they owe, and this money will help other young people train for Christian leadership.

After carefully studying conditions, we are convinced that we will need a minimum of a million dollars in order to do this job right. We have now almost \$250,000, which is one-fourth of the amount we need. Please help us so we can help these young folks, and try to make a contribution of some amount as a Christmas gift during the holidays, and then next year send some additional contribution. We pray that the Lord will move in the hearts of all of you who read this appeal and lead you to make a contribution of some amount to this fund during this Christmas season. Thank you in advance for whatever you may do. May the Lord bless you, every one.

BOB JONES, Founder
Bob Jones University
Greenville, S. C.

28,254 Subscriptions through December 10

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worker. It will clear up many difficulties in Bible interpretation... I have been humbled and made to pray for the fullness of power necessary for effective witnessing and soul winning."

DR. W. A. CRISWELL, Pastor, First Baptist Church, Dallas, writes: "I have already read large portions of it and your messages have filled my heart and blessed my life. Thank you again and again! Oh, that I might know the baptism of the Spirit in all the fullness of the meaning of the word!"

DR. JESSE M. HENDLEY, evangelist, says: "In this volume Dr. Rice has written his most powerful book. It drives us to our knees."

Send 10 Subscriptions With Christmas Money!

We suggest that Christmas time is an ideal time to send in ten subscriptions to THE SWORD OF THE LORD. Some of you have Christmas money you may use for

subscriptions. Some have received unexpected Christmas gifts and would like to show your appreciation to the giver. Here is your chance. THE SWORD OF THE LORD is usually \$2 a year. But here is our great bargain offer. \$1 will bring THE SWORD OF THE LORD 8 full months, 35 weeks. Send as many as you can at this rate.

FREE! For \$10 worth of subscriptions we will send as a beautiful premium the new 441-page book, *The Power of Pentecost*. Will you help us get 12,000 more subscriptions at once? Do not disappoint us. Thousands have helped. Be sure to do your part. If you cannot send ten subscriptions, send one or two at the bargain rate of \$1 for 8 months, 35 weeks. If possible, send ten and get the new book, *The Power of Pentecost*, free.

Please mark each subscription "new" or "renewal." Send all subscriptions to SWORD OF THE LORD PUBLISHERS, 214 West Wesley Street, Wheaton, Illinois.

What a stir of preparation, I say, as Christmas draws nigh!

Can you imagine, then, how the angelic hosts prepared for the first Christmas? Before the world began, Christ Himself and the Father had planned for it. Centuries past, prophets had been inspired to write of it; Moses, Isaiah, David, all knew of His coming in advance; and Isaiah had promised that He should be born of a virgin (Isa. 7:14). Micah had said He must be born in Bethlehem (Micah 5:2). God had

brought it about that some time before, the emperor at Rome had decreed that everybody should go back to his ancestral home to be registered for taxation. The emperor little dreamed that this was only a preparation for the first Christmas; that God Himself would fulfill His promises and that the Saviour would be born in Bethlehem. I think the angels entered into his glad secret more joyfully than anybody ever helped

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The Shepherds' Christmas

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to trim a Christmas tree, or made paper chains, or strung cranberries and popcorn, or wrapped packages, or cooked a turkey or fruit cake, or packed little stockings, or lighted the candles!

How the angels must have rejoiced as the day drew nigh. I think there was a holy competition among them. All the angels in Heaven must have gathered to watch, unseen, as Gabriel made himself known to that pure, sweet, virgin girl, Mary, and told her that she was to become the mother of the Saviour! Poor, troubled Joseph went about his duties with a troubled, sad heart. "Who would ever have thought it of Mary? Mary, the pure, the sweet, the innocent!—and now to have a child out of wedlock. How could it ever have come about that Mary should fall into sin!" So he must have mused when he found that Mary was to have a child. The angels knew the secret; and once when troubled Joseph lay in sleep God sent an angel to reveal to him, "Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost. And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins" (Matt. 1:20, 21). How the angels rejoiced in that! I can imagine that every angel and cherubim in Heaven hugged themselves in joy. They could hardly keep the secret from the human race, the ones to whom they ministered—these frail human beings of whom the angels are the guardians and ministers!

Why, the angels must have been listening in with dear Simeon, that just and devout man, when "it was revealed unto him by the Holy Ghost, that he should not see death, before he had seen the Lord's Christ" (Luke 2:26). I think the heavenly hosts of angels gathered around to set the star on its journey, the star which was seen of the wise men in the East; and many angels, no doubt, encamped around about these wise men who feared God, and delivered them, on their journey to the place where the Saviour would be found.

An angel appeared to Zacharias and promised the birth of John the Baptist, the forerunner, who was born six months before Jesus. Why, angels had to do with almost everything concerning the birth of the Saviour, it seems. It is no surprise, then, that the angel ministered to Christ in the Garden of Gethsemane; that angels stood by the open sepulchre or sat upon the stone which one had rolled away from the door. It is no surprise that when Jesus ascended into Heaven and the disciples gazed after Him with awe, "two men stood by them in white apparel; [angels]; Which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven" (Acts 1:10, 11).

Certainly angels had to be at the birth of Christ. It would have been a strange Christmas with no angels!

Could there be jealousy among the angels? I think not, among those sinless and lovely beings who are the ministers of the heirs of salvation, those who walk unashamed into the presence of a holy God. But it seems that every angel of God must have wanted to do something, to have some small part in announcing the birth of the Saviour. A good football coach, when his team has almost won a game safely, often sends in all the substitutes who have worked hard,

so they can earn their letters; and everybody has a chance to try. Sunday School teachers, putting on a Children's Day program, try to find something that every child can do. So I think God made every angel of the universe happy by letting them join that heavenly host who shouted, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men!" So the glad event was announced. And I think that the angels went back about their duties happier for having announced to the shepherds that a Saviour had come than they would have been to direct a flaming comet across the sky, or to change the tides or seasons, or set a new sun in the universe!

All true believers—little children in whose heart faith comes so easily, and older and harder hearts who find the world too much with us, our ears too dim to hear, our eyes too nearsighted to see holy things—will be wise this Christmas if we listen ever so closely and see if we can hear again an angel speaking the message, "Unto you this day is born in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord!" It will be a sweet Christmas if we can hear faintly the angelic host proclaiming, "Glory to the God in the highest," and announcing, "Peace on earth, good will toward men." Oh, may our poor human eyes this Christmastime see a little of the glory of the Lord shine round about us! What is a Christmas without angels and the glory of the Lord?

III. The Message

"And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour which is Christ the Lord."

"Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men."—Luke 2:10, 11, 14.

"Fear not," said the angel. The shepherds were "sore afraid," but they need not have been. Angels seem to love men with a holy love. They guard us, deliver us, report back to Heaven about us. They are intensely interested in all we do. This angel surely loved these shepherds and wished them well. He came to bring them good tidings; so he said to the frightened men, "Fear not."

When Zacharias saw the angel who came to announce to him, in the Temple, the coming birth of John the Baptist, "he was troubled and fear fell upon him"; but when the angel came to Joseph in a dream to announce the birth of Jesus, he said, "Fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife." Even Mary, blessed, blessed Mary, most blessed among women, who had sought and found favor with God, "when she saw him [the angel], she was troubled at his saying." But again "The angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary." Angels are always having to tell men not to be afraid. What a pitiful commentary upon a sinning race of mankind, so alien to Heaven and heavenly beings, so far from God and hence so uneasy at the presence of any of God's messengers, that we are always afraid when angels appear! And what an example of the unfailing, benevolent loving-kindness of God, that always when angels come they speak to take away our fears, to comfort our hearts, to bring us good news. At least it was so about these angels who came to announce the birth of Christ.

Fear not, you shepherds in the fields outside Bethlehem! You need not be afraid of this angel, for he brings the best news ever brought to mankind. Fear not, you shepherds, for this angel brings such news as will make it so you will need never be afraid any more. You need not be afraid of death, for you can know that death will only usher you into the presence of God and an eternal joy. You need not be afraid of damnation—the natural and proper and righteous judgment on sin—if you will repent and be saved, for Jesus Himself will take your sins on Himself and pay for them all, and we can walk into the presence of God unashamed and unafraid,

knowing our sins are forgiven, our hearts are made white, our record made clear!

Oh, fear is in millions of hearts today. I want to say to you, on the authority of this angel of God, "Fear not!" God can take away the fear. We have a Saviour who loved us enough to leave Heaven and its glory and live among men, and die a sinner's death and rise from the dead. And if God gave His Son, He will give anything else we need to those of us who trust Him. "He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?" (Rom. 8:32).

There are people who are never waked by a 'phone call in the middle of the night, are never handed a telegram, never called by long distance, but that a startled fear sweeps over their spirit. For is a terrible thing. Blessed be God, we have a Saviour who means an end to fear in those who trust Him. "Perfect love casteth out fear" (1 John 4:18).

"Tidings of great joy which shall be to all people." Good news for everybody!

Dear reader, I beg you to enjoy your part of the Christmas joy. I am not speaking of the pleasures some seek at Christmastime. I speak not of the sensate pleasures and the fleshly enjoyments of the dance, nor the excited flush that drink will bring to many at Christmastime. There is a better joy than that.

I am not speaking now even of those holy joys of the family and home and love, expressed in gifts and greetings. I hope everyone who reads these lines will have home and love and what comfort loved ones bring at Christmastime. This is closer to my heart than most people can ever know, because I am a traveler, a stranger and wanderer on the face of the earth, gone out about the Lord's business most of the time, and returning only briefly to those I love the best. I say, I hope all of you have whatever proper joy comes from giving and receiving presents, from greetings and letters and from Mother's cooking, or that of your wife. I hope you hear the glad cries of little children as they empty their stockings and unwrap their presents. I hope you join in the Christmas carols and gaze at the lighted Christmas tree, and chat with the relatives you haven't seen for many long months. I want you to have these good joys. But God has better joy for you than that, my friend!

"For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour," said the angels, "a Saviour." That is the best news anybody ever heard!

I looked in the sad face of a man behind bars, a man condemned to die. He did not need a good teacher. He needed pardon, forgiveness, salvation. He needed a Saviour! Jesus is a teacher, but He is more than that. He is a physician, but He is more than that. No prophet or sage ever spoke like Jesus spoke. No life was ever as holy or pure. No example ever shined as bright across the path of youth. But oh, beloved readers, let us remember that Christ is nothing to us until He is first of all a Saviour! People who talk the foolish talk of a "social gospel," by which they mean labor unions, relief projects, and social security, do not really know anything about Christmas! Men do not really need soup and soap most. When they get a Saviour, the by-products only of the gospel will transform their lives. If you want to cure the evils of a slum district, get people converted. Soon they will be out of the slums, in better jobs. If you want to get people educated, then get them truly saved and lights will beckon them they never before knew existed, and ideals and ambitions will arise that grow naturally out of the gospel's fruit. It is silly to talk about doing much to help mankind until you get mankind to come to Jesus Christ.

Foolish America does not re-

member that nearly all of our great colleges and universities were founded by preachers, founded with Christian motives. Wesley's revival saved England from a French Revolution. D. L. Moody did more to change America from a half-civilized backwoods than all the presidents we have ever elected. What mankind needs is a Saviour—for the by-products of Christianity bring civilization. And, thank God, a Saviour is what we have in Jesus!

You may go and tell people that if they want to have a real Christmas they need to learn what it is to have forgiveness of sins, to have their poor souls saved, to make sure of a home in Heaven.

Dear sinner friends, you can never enjoy Christmas as I enjoy it and as millions of others do, until you can look up into the Father's face and tell Him that you have received His Christmas Gift that you have the joy He promised by the angels that first

Christmas night! It is silly, it is dishonest, it is wicked, it is tragic to try to celebrate Christmas without accepting Christ as Saviour.

Look in the show windows. Every store that puts up Christmas mottoes is but the business of a hypocrite if the owner himself does not know Jesus as Saviour. "Merry Christmas!" you cry, but not in any real sense can you know the merry heart of Christmas until you have the load of sin lifted off of it and know that you have a Saviour.

Christmas will mean disillusionment, disappointment, an aching head, money wasted and worse, for many a soul who has not let Jesus come in to be the joy of Christmas, to be what He came to be—a Saviour. How can you have Christmas without accepting God's Gift? How do you know what the Saviour spoke about when he gave these tidings of great joy, if you do not accept

(Continued on Page 4)



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The Shepherds' Christmas

(Continued from page 3)

Christ as your own Saviour? The good news is for all people. It is for you. Make sure you appropriate it.

What Saviour is this that is promised? It is "Christ the Lord." The word "Christ" means *the anointed one*. Christ or *Christos* is the Greek form; *Messiah* is the Hebrew form. The angel simply meant to say that the promised Messiah of the Old Testament is the Saviour of the New. That Baby, Jesus, born in Bethlehem, laid in a manger, is the suffering servant of Isaiah 53. He is the virgin-born Son of Isaiah 7:14. He is the one whose "name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace" (Isa. 9:6). He is the great seed of David who will sit on David's throne, often foretold. He is the "anointed" of Psalm 2:2; the "Son" of Psalm 2:12. He is the Prophet whom Moses foretold in Deuteronomy 18:15. He is the Seed of Abraham, mentioned in Genesis 13:15, 16 and Genesis 17:6-8. This Baby Jesus is the Holy One David foresaw who should never see corruption in the grave (Psalm 16:10), but should rise again. He is the crucified One whose heart is revealed in Psalm 22. Jesus is the Christ of the Old Testament.

This angel there authenticated all the Old Testament as the Word of God, and if Jesus is not the one foretold to come, then He was no more than other men. If Christ stands as the Son of God, then the Bible stands as the Word of God.

"Christ the Lord" is the name of the Saviour. The word "Lord" attests His deity. It is a word which is used about God, but Christ was not ashamed to claim it, for He, too, is God, come in human form. He is the Son of the Almighty, but one of His names, too, is "the mighty God" (Isaiah 9:6).

The Creator of the heavens and the earth has been born of a woman, has nursed at a mother's breast, has grown to manhood in perfection, has died an atoning death on the cross for man's sin! This is the Saviour who was announced by the angels that night in the fields outside Bethlehem. "For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord."

And my heart runs over with joy as I thank God that this Saviour is *my Saviour*.

"Unto you is born..." Unto me is born a Saviour. He is *mine*. One day I gave myself to Him and He gave Himself to me. My sins are forgiven. My soul is saved. He is my own Saviour, praise God! I pray that He is yours, too, dear reader. And if you have not taken Him as your Saviour, do it this moment. By simple faith reach out and claim Him.

"Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace, good will toward men," chanted the heavenly hosts. Then Christ is the glory of the Father—Christ alone, of all who were ever born, perfectly fulfills the Father's will. And as He is the glory of the Father, so is He the hope of all mankind. There will never be any peace on earth except that which brings glory to God.

Peace, is a wonderful gift. Do you have peace?

One November night in Dallas,

Texas, I lay sick with the flu. The telephone rang, and when Mrs. Rice answered I heard her say, "I am sorry, but Mr. Rice is sick in bed with the flu. I am sure he would be glad to see you if it were not for that."

"What is it, Mother?" I called. "Some people wanted to come and have you pray for them, but I told them you are sick in bed and could not get up to see them."

"Tell them if they will come back to my bedroom I will be glad to pray for them," I said. And I heard her tell the unknown inquirer, over the telephone, and I learned that they promised to come at once to my home.

They came. One was a man who, the second day before, had locked himself in a hotel room and turned on the gas at the unlighted room heater. His home was broken, his health was gone. It was in the heart of the depression, and he had nowhere to go, no job, no money, no food. So he decided to end it all. The woman who was with him was a hotel chambermaid who smelled the gas, unlocked the door, opened the windows, then called the ambulance and saved his life. The two had been drawn together by the incident. He had told the woman his sad life and she had told him of her life of shame. That Saturday night they walked the streets disconsolate, troubled. Both had come alike, it seemed, to the end of everything good and happy. Brokenly, he suggested, "We need somebody to pray for us. Let's go to the priest's house and ask him to pray for us."

So they went to the house of the priest and knocked at the door. It was late at night, but this distressed man said, "Father, we are in trouble and sin. We want you to pray for us."

I think the priest was not like many other gentlemen of his office; but he said to them sharply, "I dare say both of you have been drinking, and here you come to my door to disturb me at night when I have a mass at 6:00 in the morning! Get away from my door!"

They turned away, sadder than ever. But the girl thought of her mother and said, "I'll bet my mother's pastor would pray for us. He wouldn't talk to anybody that way. Let's go and ask Brother Rice to pray for us."

He refused, saying, "I have been run away from one man's house tonight. I won't go unless you first call and find out if he is willing to pray for us."

So they telephoned, and then when I asked them to come, they came to my home.

I often look into the faces of despair—of men in jail; of sot drunkards who come into the missions to get out of the cold and for a cup of coffee; girls who come to ask what they can do to avoid public shame after their sin; people with broken homes and broken hearts. But I think I never saw two sadder faces than those two who were led by my wife into my bedroom that November night in Dallas, Texas!

I sat up in bed and told them I was glad they had come, that God loved them, that I loved them, too. I told them if they would kneel down. They were unashamed would ask the Lord to forgive their sins and come into their hearts and show them how to have peace and joy again. They knelt down. They were unashamed of their tears. I had tears, too. I put my hands upon their heads and prayed. I think the angels stooped to listen as they sobbed in penitence over ruined and wasted lives, and as I prayed and wept over two sinners who, just as all of us do, needed mercy, though they did not deserve it. As they knelt there I told them how to trust the Saviour; how to trust Him for salvation now and for victory tomorrow. After a season they arose and sat beside the bed.

There were many problems, many questions to be answered. I helped them the best I could with the Word of God.

After a bit that poor man, with shabby clothes, who came out of the night to ask me to pray for him, looked at me intently and said, "Preacher this is the strangest thing I ever knew!"

"What is strange?" I asked.

"Why day before yesterday I tried to kill myself. I didn't want to live. I had nothing to live for. We have walked up and down the streets all afternoon and this evening, trying to find what to do. I was never in such a turmoil and trouble of mind and heart in my life as I have been just today and yesterday. Now somehow, strangely, it is all gone! I am not worried, am not unhappy. I don't have an anxiety about a job or about what will happen to me tomorrow. I just feel the quietest peace in here," he said, as he tapped himself over his heart. "Isn't that strange?" he asked.

"That is not strange," I said. "I have seen the same thing happen to thousands of others. Peace is what Jesus gives. Nobody in the world can ever have true peace without coming to take Jesus as Saviour. He is our peace."

That blustery November night, that poor ruined man learned what the angels meant when they sang, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men." Oh, may the peace of Jesus this Christmas be with you who read this!

IV. The Experience

We have talked about the shepherds, the angels, the angels' message, and it would be a lovely story if the story ended there. But it does not. The shepherds did not have to leave the matter with a sweet message from Heaven but no practical results in their lives. Listen to the rest of the story.

"And it came to pass, as the angels were gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds said one to another, Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord had made known unto us. And they came with haste, and found Mary, and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger. And when they had seen it, they made known abroad the saying which was told them concerning this child. And all they that heard it wondered at those things which were told them by the shepherds. But Mary kept all these things, and pondered them in her heart. And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told unto them." Luke 2:15-20.

First, these shepherds believed the story. They said, "Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass." Blessed, thrice blessed, are they who believe the Word of God! Remember that Jesus Himself said later, after His resurrection, to the doubting disciples, "O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken" (Luke 24:25). These shepherds were ignorant, but they believed the words of the angel, the message sent from Heaven!

And in my heart, at this Christmas season, I praise the Lord for millions of common people who still believe all the story of the Babe who was born in Bethlehem, believe that the angels really appeared, that the Glory of God shone round about, that Jesus was born of the Virgin Mary, as the Scripture says. Other people may have believed after they went to see, but the shepherds believed before they went! Doubting Thomas missed the first appearance of Jesus after His resurrection, and would not believe the disciples. He said, "Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe" (John 20:25). When Jesus appeared again and Thomas saw Him and was convinced, he said, "My Lord and my God." Hear, then, the answer of Jesus, "Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed" (John 20:29). Sin is back of all the unbelief about the Lord Jesus Christ and the Bible and God's

revelation about salvation. One reason the angels brought the message to these shepherds is that they knew the shepherds would believe it.

Second, these honest-hearted shepherds made an honest investigation. They really wanted to see the Lord Jesus who was born at Bethlehem and wrapped in swaddling clothes and laid in a manger. "And they came with haste, and found Mary, and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger" (Luke 2:16). Oh, this Christmastime, how blessed it would be if every unbeliever, every infidel, every agnostic and doubter, would only give God a chance to prove Himself!

The Baby was there! They had a chance to see for themselves that the angel's message was true! So did doubting Thomas, who said he would believe if he could see the nailprints and put his hand in the nailprints and in the wounded side of the Saviour. He really got a chance to prove to himself that Jesus was risen from the dead. So it was that Nathaniel, who, not believing that any good thing could come out of Nazareth, finally obeyed the urging of his friend, Philip, and came to see. And Nathaniel said, "Rabbi, thou art the Son of God; thou art the King of Israel" (John 1:49). The Queen of Sheba did not believe all the wondrous things that were told about the divinely-given wisdom of Solomon. But her honest heart at least led her to come and see, and she learned that "the half was not told me!"

Here is a principle of God's loving mercy: always a hungry heart can find out the truth about God if he wants to. Always a doubting soul, who really wants to know, can find out whether the Bible is

true, whether Christ is the Son of God, whether the Bible will work in a modern world. Remember that Jesus said in John 7:17: "I any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself." A better translation would be, "If any man be willing to do his will, he shall know..." Those who really seek God with a willing heart will find Him.

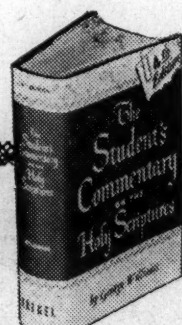
That was the very same principle stated in Jeremiah 29:13, "And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart."

The same kind of promise is in Hosea 6:3, "Then shall we know, if we follow on to know the Lord."

Blessed promises these which show that any doubter, any distressed and darkened mind, any troubled but honestly-seeking heart can find the Saviour! Those shepherds went to see the Baby Jesus. How simple, how wise, how blessed that was!

Too many people sit out in the field in the darkened night and say, "I do not believe that any baby was born of a virgin in Bethlehem. I do not believe what the angels promised. I do not believe that Jesus is a Saviour. I do not believe that He brings good news, glad tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people." Well, as long as you sit out in the field and do not go to the manger to see for yourself, you only prove the stubbornness of your self-will and the sinfulness of your heart that does not want a Saviour. There shepherds wanted a Saviour. They were glad that Jesus was born. So they went, and straightway, and with glad, believing hearts; and all their expectations were met!

Why, that is the same way the (Continued on page 6)



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Prayer and Revival

(Continued from page 1)

ment as preparatory to everything else.

It was so with Finney. When the great evangelist arrived in a town, the first thing he did was to inquire, "Who in this town knows how to pray?" I remember in one instance he gathered about him only three people. They prayed together day after day until the blessing came with great power.

The Revivals Led By Dr. R. A. Torrey Came By Prayer

Behind the revivals led by Dr. Torrey was a group of which I was privileged to be a member. Every Saturday night at ten o'clock a little group of men met in an upper room near the Moody Church and prayed for God's blessing upon the preacher of the next day. Sometimes Dr. Torrey himself was present. Frequently that little group did not know when the sun rose; they did not go to breakfast, they went from that room to the place of preaching, warm with the very heart of Christ in them.

One night at two o'clock, Dr. Torrey being present, they began to pray that the Lord would send him around the world on evangelistic missions, and that was the burden of their prayers until next morning. In answer to those prayers he was sent. Within a few weeks a deputation of men from Australia waited upon Dr. Torrey and invited him to go out there to conduct evangelistic missions. Those of us who knew him did not regard him as especially called to evangelistic work, though he was a great teacher and a great advocate of the truth. But that group of men clung together in prayer for Dr. Torrey, and wherever he went over the world their prayers followed him, and more than once cablegrams were received from different parts of the world by that prayer meeting in Chicago, when there were difficulties to be met. So at the back of every revival there is the prayer spirit, and into every revival the prayer spirit must go.

Mr. Moody said that when he went to London on his first visit the Spirit of God so fell upon the audience in a certain church that he could not understand it. There were four hundred inquirers in the after-meeting in one evening. He could not understand the reason for this outburst of power until he learned that an invalid woman, hearing that he had preached in the morning, did not eat her dinner that she might spend all the time in prayer to God that He would bless Mr. Moody in the evening meeting, and send a revival through his ministry. And that was the beginning of his work in Great Britain.

A Revival Largely in Answer to One Woman's Prayer

I have been thinking over the experiences of my own life, and I believe that in my first little pastorate a revival came in answer to the prayers of one woman. It was in the woods of North Carolina, where I was to stay nine months before going to a theological college. Arrangements had been for me to go from the rural church down to a schoolhouse to preach on Sunday afternoon. It was raining hard, and there were just seven people present, but the dew of Heaven fell on that little company. Two of them were already saved, and the rest yielded their lives to Christ before the meeting broke up. At the close one of them rose and said, "Will you preach here tonight? If so, I will go and tell the neighbors." I consented, and about twenty-five people came. A revival began that resulted in the conversion of nearly one hundred people.

After the sermon on the last Sunday there came up to me a gray-haired woman who said, in a motherly way, "My dear boy, this is my home and those whom you baptized this morning were all my relatives, friends, and neighbors. When I heard you were going to preach here on Sunday evening, two weeks ago, I said, 'I will pray every minute that young man

preaches, that God will save my friends.' I am a schoolmistress at a place sixty miles from here, and when my niece wrote me that you were conducting a mission, I dismissed my school a few minutes earlier in the afternoon that I might spend the time in prayer. Now I have come here to see what God has done in answer to my prayer, and I find He has converted my brother, a nephew and a niece, and fifty or sixty of my neighbors and friends." So God had heard that woman's prayer sixty miles away, and had given me my heart's desire in answer to her prayer.

A College Revival In Answer to Prayer

I was invited to preach in a college on Thanksgiving Day. The president wrote me that they looked for salvation on that day and for conversions among the students. This year the senior class were unsaved, with one or two exceptions, and there were some twelve or fifteen in the class. "We want you to prepare your address and come and preach for salvation," he wrote. "We do not wish to send these bright young men out into the world unsaved."

When I arrived at the station, I found the president walking up and down the platform in a nervous frame of mind, and as he took me by the hand he said, "I have not slept a wink during the night. We have learned that there has been a conspiracy led by the senior class against today's service. They have got all the students in the college pledged not to be influenced by anything you say." I said, "Well, doctor, it looks rather a gloomy prospect." He said, "It does, and if God Almighty does not come in, we are surely beaten, but some of us have been praying, and I believe He will come to our help"; and the great, strong man stood there and wept.

When I preached it was like throwing a rubber ball against a granite wall. The students sat round in groups nudging each other, as hard as stone; and when I made an appeal at the close and asked those who would like to decide for Christ and would like me to pray for them to kindly stand up, just one little fellow stood up right in front of me. He lived out in the village, and was so insignificant that the ringleaders had forgotten to take him into the conspiracy.

That afternoon there was a prayer meeting led by the president, with the Christian students. And I never heard such prayers in any other college, such broke-hearted petitions, and such a realization of weakness and dependence upon God. Somehow I felt when I went out from the prayer meeting, which had lasted for an hour and a half, that God was going to work. I thought of my experience in the woods of North Carolina, and felt that the God who had answered prayer then would answer it now.

In the evening I enjoyed preaching rather better, but they had caught the little fellow and he was at the back among the conspirators, looking large in his own estimation that now he was included among those who opposed the whole movement. I preached as earnestly as I knew how, beseeching them to be reconciled to God, made the appeal, and again there was not a single response. I pronounced the benediction, and the audience quietly rose and passed out.

I found the president in the midst of a group of the teachers,

and they were still praying. The tears were literally coursing down the good man's cheeks as he was praying that somehow God would touch the hearts of that senior class and the other students under his care. We remained there for five or ten minutes, and in the midst of it the door opened, and one of the young men came awkwardly in and said, "Can I say a word, sir?" He lifted his head, and continued, "When I got out of the door of the service hall, that covenant with Hell was broken, and I have come to ask you to pray for me, as I would like to be a Christian."

While we were pointing him to Christ, the door opened again, and another student entered; then another and another. We stayed there until one o'clock in the morning; and before we left that room every student in the college except two had come in and asked for prayer, and had accepted Christ.

Robert Murray McCheyne spent

from six to eight a. m. and an hour after tea shut in with God.

Samuel Rutherford rose at three o'clock in the morning to meet God in prayer.

John Fletcher stained the walls of his room with the breath of his prayers. Sometimes he would pray all night.

Luther said: "If I fail to spend two hours in prayer each morning, the Devil gets the victory through the day." His motto was: "He that has prayed well has studied well."

Wesley spent two hours daily in prayer, and often more than this. He began at four in the morning. One who knew him well says of him: "He thought prayer to be more his business than anything else, I have seen him come from his closet with a serenity of face next to shining."

From THE EVANGELICAL CHRISTIAN, February, 1921.

"Where is Your Faith?"

(Continued from page 1)

it is put in human appearances; and we are all along tempted to put our faith in mere human appearances. How we are influenced, how we are swayed, how we are lifted up or cast down, by mere appearances! If the weather be fair, if no lowering clouds come to menace, if all goes merry as a wedding bell, our hearts seem hopeful and our faith buoyant. But that is not the test. How is it when the heavens are darkened with clouds? How is it when the loved one gasps, and the sands of life seem running to the end? How is it when crepe is on the door? How is it when the granary seems scant and the crops have no promise? How is it when appearances are all against us? Our faith is misplaced, if our faith is put in mere human appearances. That was a great saying given by a valiant leader when he said: "Never take counsel of your fears, or of appearances."

Our faith is misplaced, I go on to say, when we put it in human agency. And certainly, we are greatly tempted, and constantly, to put our faith in human agency. But all along, the Scriptures, by telling illustrations and by pungent precepts, would turn us away from putting our faith in mere human agency. The Bible tells us why God makes choice, as He does, of such remarkable instrumentalities. He was chosen the weak things of the world to confound the mighty, and the reason is given us there in His Book: "That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God."

A generation or two removed from us, God startled the world by finding a lad yonder in the country place in England, not yet out of his teens, and God brought him up to the world's greatest city, to great London, and set him right there in its heart to preach His wonderful gospel. Before this young man was thirty, royalty was at his feet, and the British Parliament marvelled at his power, and the lines of his testimony and power had gone out to the ends of the earth—Charles Haddon Spurgeon, the most victorious gospel preacher of all his century, and perhaps of any century since the apostolic times. He was a man uncollected, and yet God said through him to world about us. "I want you to look at this man and listen to him that your faith may not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God."

Our God is surprising us all

along by His strange choice of human instrumentalities. There is the humble country boy. He has never been to the city at all. He is following his plow. He goes to the little country church house, in the quiet midsummer meeting. His heart is moved, his conscience probed, his judgment convinced, his will aroused, and he bows down in humble penitence before Christ, and he is saved. And then he follows his plow still again and strange impulses stir in his heart, and great thoughts burn in his brain. He is thinking about preaching the gospel. He is thinking about going out and telling the world what a dear Saviour he has found, and how he would have every man know the same blessed Saviour. The years pass on, several of them, half a dozen, a dozen, and yonder is that country lad in a surging city, rallying the tempted thousands of sinning, beaten and wandering humanity, rallying them around the flag of Christ Jesus, the Lord. Who is he? A plain plowboy, clothed upon with the grace and might of the Spirit of God, and in him and through him God is saying to the world: "See him now, and listen to him, and remember, your faith is not to stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God."

Oh, how it gladdens my heart this Tuesday night to have the faith to believe that somewhere in this broad country, out on the prairies, or out yonder nestling amid the trees, in some little cottage, a mother folds to her heart a tiny baby boy, and when you and I shall be sleeping beneath the roses and shall be perhaps forgotten, that boy will be going up and down this country, rallying the wavering, sinning thousands around the flag of Christ, a child out from some home of poverty and need, and God will be saying through him to the world: "See him, now, and listen, that your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God."

Small Faith May Limit God

But I think that most of all our faith is misplaced because we limit God. That is a striking expression used in one of the Psalms, where the psalmist said concerning Israel of old: "They limited the Holy One of Israel." They "limited God." Mankind can limit God, and does limit Him. At first thought, that seems impossible. The infinite God, filling all immensity, without beginning of days or ending of years, omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent, eternal—at first thought it seems impossible that He could be limited, and yet He can be, and is, limited. Man limits God, else man is a mere machine, without any more volition than a tree or a stone. Man can say "No" to God, or man can say "Yes" to God. Man can seek God's face, and by divine grace become God's friend, and go God's road, and glorify God's great name; or man can be rebellious, and offer his protest against God, and turn

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his back upon God, and miss the right way, and come to defeat and failure.

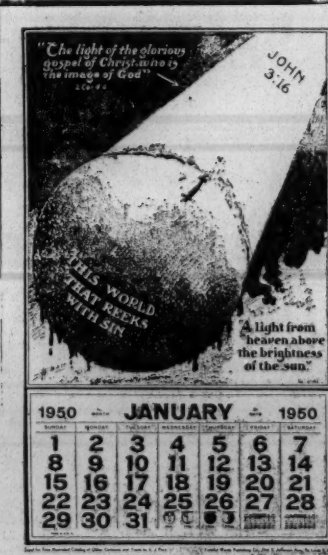
Man limits God. How does he limit Him? The ways are many. We can limit God even in our very prayers. You have probably heard prayers which had in them a limitation upon God. Full many a time when we pray that prayer, "Not my will, but thine, be done," our hearts really mean: "Not thy will, O God, but mine be done." Ofttimes we are found trying to persuade God to come to our notion of things, and accept our view of things, without regard to His wisdom and will. All the while He tells us: "You leave your case to me, and trust your case to me, and submit your case to me, and I will do the wisest and best thing possible for you," and yet full many a time our prayers really mean: "Nevertheless, O Lord, not thy will be done at all, but mine be done," and in that way we limit Him.

And then we limit God by our poor lives. Every life is either a channel or a clog, a channel through which God sends His blessing, or a clog to hinder and obstruct such blessing. A human life can be a non-conductor, failing to transmit to others what God would send through that life unto others. That is indeed a pathetic picture, where Paul writes one of the New Testament churches, saying: "For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you, even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ." Paul was writing to a church, and he was saying to that church: "Some of you church members so walk as to become the enemies of the cross of Christ."

Your attention has been called to that solemn picture in the last book of the Bible, where Jesus stands outside a church, begging to be admitted. Listen to Him: "Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me." Jesus is there, outside a church—outside! His own people have the door closed, and have Him outside, and there He stands on the outside, knocking, and saying: "Won't you let me enter? for I come to do you good, and not evil at all." "O Jesus, thou art standing, outside the fast-closed door!" Can you think of anything more heart-breaking this night than to imagine yourselves keeping Jesus out, keeping Jesus away from some other life, yourself a clog, obstructing, yourself a non-conductor? He wishes to send through you a message of life and grace

(Continued on page 7)

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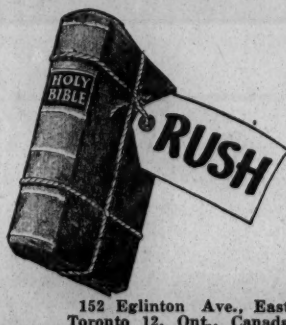
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Bob Jones University Ministerial Students--Fall of 1949



GREENVILLE, S. C. The Bob Jones University Ministerial Association, during the first semester of the 1949-50 academic year, numbers approximately 1000 students representing 54 of the estimated 250 protestant denominations in America. These young men are from practically every state in the Union and from a number of foreign countries.

Leader of the group is Dr. Gilbert Stenholm, university Director of Extension and a member of the faculty of the School of Religion. The officers of the organization include John Adkenson, president; Robert S. Johnson, vice-president; Stacy Davis, secretary; Robert Warren, chorister; and Don McClintock, pianist.

The work of the Ministerial Association is governed by the philosophy of Dr. Bob Jones, Sr., founder of Bob Jones University, that "The way to learn to preach is to preach." Ministerial students begin their training in their fresh-

man year. Their work is organized around the class, "The Preacher and His Problems," which is taught by Dr. Stenholm. The course is designed to help the students meet all kinds of problems. Some of the work includes discussion of such topics as church organization, program planning, Sunday School administration, direction of young people's organizations, church activities and policies, missionary programs, the work of various denominations, dealing with the spiritual problems of individual church members, and many other responsibilities which pertain to pastoral work, and evangelistic and missionary endeavors.

The "preacher boys," like all other university students, retain their denominational identity at Bob Jones University. They agree on the essentials of fundamental Christianity and then agree to disagree about the non-essentials. Denominational controversies are

non-existent.

A very important part of the training of the ministerial students is the practical experience they receive through their extension activities. The students carry on a variety of work. Some direct Youth for Christ rallies and young people's groups. Some carry on mission work and child evangelism. Some are choir directors. Some fill pulpits as supplies. Some even have pastorates or assistant pastorates. A few have organized and built churches in communities where no churches existed. All of the young men do personal work and help in canvassing for revival meetings, and in visitation. Each week-end, approximately 600 of the students are away from the campus for extension work.

The young men in the ministerial class are divided into groups of twelve each. Two of each group are chosen as leaders who direct the work of the group and clear their plans through Dr.

Stenholm's office. Five of the groups form a section, and each section has a definite area assigned to it—usually three or four counties in South Carolina, North Carolina, Tennessee, or Georgia. The "preacher boys" go as far north as Charlotte and Concord, North Carolina, and as far south as Madison, Georgia. They go as far as Charleston, South Carolina, and Knoxville, Tennessee. Each section is asked to keep all projects in its assigned area and to feel generally responsible for it. Results from their work have been amazing. During an eight week period of this school year, these students conducted more than 6300 public services, they also talked to more than 16,500 people individually. More than 2,800 of those contacted personally and in the services received Christ as their personal Saviour. Over 1,200 more rededicated their lives to the Lord, and more than 120,500 Gos-

(Continued on page 7)

The Shepherds' Christmas

(Continued from page 4)

wise men came from the East! They came in glad expectancy. They came with treasures all ready to give. They were willing to follow the Word of God, as far as it led, and then they rejoiced when they saw that the star backed up the Word of God. And how glad they were when they saw the Baby Jesus and opened up their treasures and gave Him gold and frankincense and myrrh!

Simeon in the Temple had no trouble believing that Christ was Messiah, the virgin-born Son of God. Anna, the prophetess who waited there, had no trouble believing it. Why, down through the centuries all the humble hearts who long for God, who want forgiveness, who confess their need of a Saviour, have found no trouble believing the story of the Lord

Jesus Christ, born in Bethlehem, laid in a manger, wrapped in swaddling clothes. Here is the heart of Christmas and the heart of Christianity itself! And all those who do not believe have only themselves to blame. God is ready to reveal Himself to all those who seek him.

This Bible claims to be the Word of God. Yet I have faced infidels and so-called agnostics up and down the land and found they were ignorant of the Bible, though it is acknowledged as the greatest book of the world, the greatest book of history, of literature, of morals and humanities, even if it were not the inspired Word of God. But infidels hate the Bible, mock it, do not learn it, do not submit themselves to it. What infidel or agnostic or

boasted doubter ever spends any time in prayer, waiting on God to reveal Himself, confessing his sins, longing for forgiveness and cleansing and grace to do right? What man of all the boasted unbelievers really waits on God with a humble, contrite heart, longing for a Saviour, longing for the Truth, the Way, the Life, Light?

A young man with a little learning who had been reading extracts from Tom Paine and Bob Ingersoll in those infamous little Blue Books (trashy things with paper covers selling for a nickel to the unlearned), once said to me: "I can't help it, can I, if I can't believe? I just have a scientific, investigating mind, and my reasoning does not account for God. Let those who can believe such things do so, but a man of my background and reasoning and investigation cannot."

However, I frankly told him that he had never made any honest investigation, never sought to find the truth about God and the Bible and Christ. I dared him, in the presence of his younger brother, to get down on his knees with me and confess to God that he was a sinner, by whatever standard he was measured, and ask that if there be a God, He make Himself known. I dared him to promise God Almighty, if there be a God, that he would honestly follow whatever light should come from God; that if the Bible proved itself the Word of God, he would obey it and love it and live by it; that if Christ proved to be the virgin-born Son of God, the only Saviour, that he would trust Him and surrender to Him as Saviour and Lord. And then I simply told the young man that I knew about God and the Bible; that I had proved it and so had his father and mother, so had millions of other saints, and that if he, this very day, were unwilling to get down before God and humble himself and seek to find God, I would know that he was a hypocrite, unwilling to face the truth and unwilling to find it. I had him there, and he knew it. Soon he was down with me on his knees, confessing that he was frail and weak and that he had fallen

short even of his own standards of morals, and asking that if there be a God, He would reveal Himself to his heart; promising that he would honestly investigate the Bible and try to learn what God said, if it perchance be the Word of God. He didn't pray one minute before he was in tears, and soon he confessed that it was all true; the only trouble had been with him and not with God. God is willing to receive any seeking sinner and to reveal Himself to any honest heart who is willing to go look in the manger and see if the Baby Jesus be there.

Oh, this Christmastime, wouldn't it be the best time in the world to turn away from this folly, this idle chatter of unbelief, and make an honest investigation and see if you can find the Baby Jesus there where the Bible says He is? Why not open the Bible and begin to seek whether God has a message to you, to see whether Jesus Christ does not prove Himself to be the Son of God? Why not kneel in your room before God and confess your failures, your sins, your shortcomings, and ask God to give you light, to show you what you ought to do? Ask God to reveal Himself! Why not face the sin question honestly (for nothing but sin ever keeps anybody from God) and confess your sins to yourself and to the Creator, wherever He be, however He may reveal Himself? Surely only a fool would say that there is no Creator. And if there be a Creator who made man, surely He cares what is in man's heart and will listen when man prays, if he pray with a humble and contrite heart, seeking the light, wanting to do right. This Christmas season, why not wait on the ministry of the Word, listen to the preaching of godly men? Back of all infidelity is sin, defeat and self-will. I promise you that like the fog mists disappear when the sun raises hot and warm breezes blow, so your doubts will disappear as you wait before God, confessing your sin, reading the Bible, seeking light from Heaven. God reveals Himself to those who really seek Him with all their hearts. These humble shepherds

went directly to Bethlehem, found the stable, and saw the Baby Jesus with their own eyes. They went away happy, and so may you, if you will honestly seek to know the truth this Christmas season. What a sin, what folly, and what eternal loss is yours, if you do not make Christmas your own this time by finding the Saviour for yourself!

The shepherds made haste; I hope you will do the same. This was the best news the shepherds had ever heard. It is the best news you have heard, too, and I hope you will accept it. When the prodigal son came to Himself he said, "I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee, And am no more worthy to be called thy son." And then, bless God, "he arose and came to his father!" Will you do the same today?

The last thing we will note about these shepherds is that they "returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told unto them." Oh, then, if you have found the Lord Jesus, and if you have a real Christmas in your heart, tell others about it. When a woman stooped down and touched the hem of His garment and was wonderfully healed, Jesus asked, "Who touched me?" and made her stand forth and confess it (Luke 8:45-47). He wanted her to tell it. When that maniac of Gadara, that man whom no man could bind, who had lived in the tombs, who cut himself on the stones and lived without clothes, was wonderfully converted and healed, with demons cast out—when He sat at the feet of Jesus, clothed and in his right mind, he wanted to follow Jesus everywhere. He went; but Jesus said to him, "Return to thine own house, and shew how great things God hath done unto thee." And then we are told that "he went his way, and published throughout the whole city how great things Jesus had done unto him" (Luke 8:39).

Let us then, like the shepherds, give our glad witness to the joy we have found in Jesus, with our sins forgiven and our hearts made light. Let everyone this Christmas season who knows the peace on earth the shepherds told about, and who has received as his own the Saviour then announced, tell others today and share the good news. That is what I am trying to do in this sermon.

But one thing remains to be said, and that is this. Will you accept Jesus as your own Saviour this day? This holy Christmastime, with the impulses of the Bible story, of sweet Christmas carols, and of family influences, will you be saved today? Open your heart, confess your sin to Christ, trust Him to forgive you and save you now! If you will do so, first tell the Lord so right there, then write and tell me so. You may either copy the statement which I print here, and sign it, giving name and address, and date, or write me in your own words as you prefer. But I beg you, do it this very day! I will write you a personal letter of counsel and help and how glad I will be to do it. Be sure to tell your loved ones, too, if you take Jesus today. I mean this for unconverted sinners who will today accept Christ as Saviour.

My Decision For Christ

Date _____
Evangelist John R. Rice, Editor,
THE SWORD OF THE LORD,
214 W. Wesley
Wheaton, Illinois

Dear Brother Rice:
I have read your sermon on "The Shepherds' Christmas." I believe the Christmas story, that Jesus was born at Bethlehem to be our Saviour. I confess myself a poor lost sinner. I believe that He died for my sins and is willing to save me now. Here and now I turn my heart to Him, I confess my sin and guilt, I depend on Him to save me! With all my heart I surrender to Him now and trust Him. I am writing this as my confession that today I take Christ as my Saviour. By His help I will try to live for Him the rest of my days.

Signed _____
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"Where is Your Faith?"

(Continued from page 5)

and hope to others, and you are a non-conductor. Can you imagine anything more serious than that? We limit God by our lives. Every Christian whose life is wrong with God positively hinders God and limits God by that much.

But most of all, we limit God, I dare say, by our unbelief, our unfaith. Israel could not enter the Promised Land because of unbelief; and you and I are kept out of many a promised land because of unbelief, because of unfaith. Jesus wishes us to believe in Him. The right sort of man delights to be believed in. You cannot grieve the right sort of a man in any other way quite so deeply as to indicate to him that you do not take him at full face value, as he represents himself to you. The right sort of a man wishes to be believed in, to be taken at his word. God delights to be believed in, and the deepest grief to Him is given Him by our unfaith, our unbelief. We are told here in the gospels that in one certain community Jesus could do no mighty works because of the unbelief of the people. Unbelief hindered Him. Unbelief fettered Him, even Christ Jesus, the Lord. And so He comes to us tonight, saying: "According to your faith, so be it unto you. Where is your faith?" He comes to us tonight saying: "If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth. Where is your faith?"

An All-Powerful God Can Save Hard Cases

We are all along talking about "hard cases." Now, how foolish and unwise and wrong is such talk. When we think of God He asks us: "Is anything too hard for the Lord?" That was a mighty question Paul asked when he asked: "Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you, that God should raise the dead?" Granted a God who has all power in Heaven and earth, and who formed the worlds by the word of His power, granted a Being like that, and where is there any difficulty or mystery in such a God raising people from death and the grave? So that our talk about "hard cases" in God's sight, is all out of place and grievous in His holy presence.

I wonder, my fellow Christians, if in these latter days our faith gets much higher for mankind than for the salvation of the children in the Sunday School, and the plastic, responsive young people that are all about us. Where is the faith now that claims the hardened sinner for Christ? Where is the faith that claims the old man with the gray about his temples, far down in the afternoon of life—where is the faith that claims that man for God? Where is the faith that claims the man abandoned to sinful and consuming habits? Where is the faith that claims him for God? Where is the faith that claims the big business man, great and strengthful, masterful and powerful, but preoccupied, living as though this world were all, forgetting that out there a few steps ahead is the judgment and eternity? Where is the faith that claims him, from all that preoccupation, for Christ Jesus and His great salvation? Where is the faith that claims the very difficult case for the Lord Christ? Oh, how we limit God, that we do not go out and claim men, no matter what their hindrances and their limitations and their sins! How we grieve God, if we do not go out and claim them in the name of Christ, even the most difficult cases, for the wonders of His grace and His great forgiveness!

May I tell you the most wonderful conversion that I ever witnessed in all my life? Out in the Middle West, where it has been my delight to go many a time, in the out door camp-meetings, some years ago I went and found in that particular community some very difficult religious conditions. There were more aged people in that community, unsaved, than I have ever witnessed anywhere in all my life, before or since. The religious conditions of the community were hard and difficult.

There had been all sorts of pesky religious debates—how miserable they all are, and how inexcusable!—and the people were set and gritty and hard in their relations toward one another. What a tragedy when that is so!

I was there some two or three days, and more and more it dawned upon me how difficult all the conditions were. They told me daily about those white-haired men and women who went groping life's way without God and without hope. After some days, they told me about Big Jim, the most difficult sinner, they said, west of Fort Worth, even as far west as El Paso. They so described him physically that I could not miss him if he came to the meeting, and they said: "He will come one time to hear you, and then he will swear at you, and rail at you, and curse out the whole meeting, and the preachers and churches and everybody, and then he will wait a year and come back a year from now to go over the same performance again." That was their report of him.

I stood up to preach one evening and in came Big Jim. I could not miss him, from their description. Yonder he sat, far down the aisle before me, at the rear of the great arbor, nor did he take his eye, it seemed, one time from the minister, while his message was being given. At the close of the message, I made the call for men and women who would then and there humbly and honestly make surrender of their poor, undone and sinful lives to the forgiving mercy and help of the divine Saviour, and down every aisle white-haired men and women came. It was one of those memorable nights, never to be forgotten. Big Jim kept his seat, nor did he seem to move. After awhile, the meeting ended, and the people gathered about me, or gathered in little groups to discuss the wonders that their eyes had witnessed that night. One after another was named who had "come over the line" and made the great surrender that night to Jesus. And then, ever and anon, these talkers would make a passing remark about the presence of Big Jim, and they speculated about his presence, and about the possibility of his coming any more. One said: "No; he will not be back. He will swear at our preacher, and at all the Christian people, nor will he return until next year." But another said: "Yes; he had a different look on him tonight from what I have even seen before. I look for him to come again."

Presently the preacher slipped away from the crowd, for it was late, and wended his way around the hillside to the little cottage, far removed from the camping throngs, where he might have quiet and rest, and as he went around that little mountain side he heard somebody talking. Oh, it was so earnest! The preacher did not mean to be an eavesdropper, and yet he seemed chained in his very tracks. And when he stopped and listened to that strange talk, he discovered in a moment what it was, and there were two of them, and that they were praying, for one, who spoke for the two, said: "We two, O Christ, agree, we want Big Jim saved, that the mouths of gainsayers may be stopped in this country. They are saying, O Christ, that Big Jim is too much for God, that even God cannot stop him. They are saying that, and we want the mouths of gainsayers stopped, and the whole land to know that Christ is able to save even the chief of sinners; and we two, here on the mountain side, late in the night, give thee Big Jim, believing thy great promise: 'If two of you shall agree on earth as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven.' For the glory of Christ, simply and only, we pray you, save Big Jim."

I went quietly on my way. I do not know who they were, who they were praying. I never knew. I found my cottage, and the night passed, and the next day came and wore to nightfall, and I was again under the arbor, facing the love of God, going out after any soul on earth that has wandered

mass of people. I stood up to preach and looked everywhere, but Big Jim was not present. But just as I began to speak, in he came, at the same place as on the previous night, and then my message seemed to fly away, and I said: "We will pause and ask God to give the preacher what he ought to say. He does not know. He would speak God's message, whatever it is, tonight, and this man will lead us in prayer that the preacher may speak what, and as Christ would have His preacher tonight to speak."

And the prayer was finished, and then the preacher began again, and told simply and only that story of the prodigal son, the easily influenced, impulsive youth, restless, dissatisfied, who went away from home against the protests of wisdom and love, and took his part of the inheritance, and went down the toboggan slide at a rapid pace, and wasted all his substance in riotous living. And when his substance was gone, his friends were gone. The hail-fellows-well-met of the other days had fled, and he was down yonder in the swine fields, this lad, feeding the swine, himself eating of the husks wherewith he fed the swine. One day, as the Scriptures tell the story, the young fellow "came to himself." He saw himself as he was. Memory was alert, and the months and the years of his separation from home, came trooping back to his recollection, and the young man said: "I have sinned. I have missed it. This is the way of defeat and death. I will go back to father, and I will confess in his sight and in God's sight how I have missed it, and how I have sinned." And then he put that kindling desire into effect, that sublime resolution into action, and he betook himself back the homeward way, and as he came toward the old home, the father saw him, even from afar; the father was waiting, longing to see him; and down the road the father came, and put his arms about the boy, as the boy began his confession, and the father called to a servant: "Bring the best robe for this boy," and to another: "Kill the fatted calf," and to another: "Bring the ring to put on this boy's finger," emblem of the love that never dies. And there was music, and there was rejoicing, and there was victory.

That was all I said, except that I added: "This story of the prodigal son is simply a picture of the away from God, which soul God wishes to forgive and recover and

Bob Jones Students

(Continued from page 6)

pel tracts were distributed.

The class work also includes the study of THE SWORD OF THE LORD. The students outline and summarize two sermons from each issue of the paper. By the end of the year, each "preacher boy" will have outlined seventy sermons in this manner. During the present semester they are using as reference books, besides the Bible, Dr. John R. Rice's book, PRAYER, ASKING AND RECEIVING, and SPURGEON'S SERMON NOTES, edited and compiled by Dr. David Otis Fuller. Next semester, other books emphasizing evangelism will be used for special reference work.

save, and will so save, if such soul will come to Him."

And then I said: "Will the audience remain seated? Without any singing at all, is there some man here tonight, a prodigal, far from Heaven and God, who says: 'I want God's mercy, and I will honestly yield myself to God to get it,' let him come and take my hand."

Would you believe it? Big Jim started. Oh, the sight, the sight, the sight! And presently the men saw him coming, and hundreds of sobbing men stood to their feet, and sobbed aloud, and as he came down the aisle slowly, for it was with difficulty he walked, hundreds of men joined him, and came down with him. And when at last he got to me and took my hand, he said: "Sir, I put you on your sacred honor, will the Great Master save me, if I will give up to Him?"

And I said: "Sir, on my sacred honor, I declare that He will, if you will just honestly surrender your case to Him."

And the men put in with voices, scores and scores: "It is so, Jim. We made the surrender and He saved us. You make it, and you will find out for yourself."

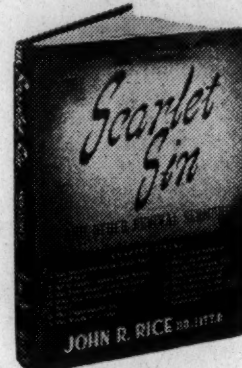
And then again, waiting a moment, he looked at me, still holding my hand, and said: "I want you to remember, sir, that you are speaking to the worst man out of perdition. Would the Master save a man like that, if he would give up to Him?"

I said: "Sir, on my Master's own statement, I declare to you that He will save you, even if you are the chief sinner out of perdition, if you will honestly surrender to Him."

And they punctuated my remark

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with a chorus: "It is so, Jim. Try it and you will find out."

Once again he looked at me and then he said, finally: "Sir, when would the Great Master save me, if I should give up to Him right now?"

And I said: "Sir, on His own word, which many of us have proved, our Great Master will

(Continued on page 8)

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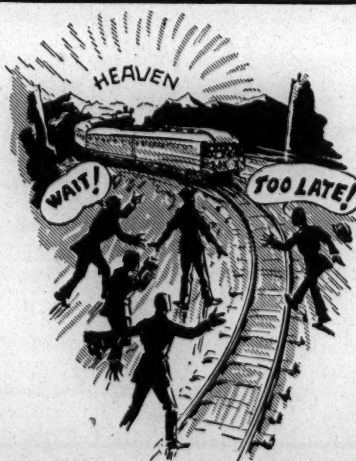
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"Where is Your Faith?"

(Continued from page 7)

save you, and your heart shall know that your sins are forgiven, right now, if right now you will honestly surrender to Him."

And then he turned that big bronzed face upward, as if looking for the Master Himself, and he gasped out his prayer, just this: "Lord Jesus, the worst man in the world gives up to you right now."

Oh, I cannot tell the rest! I do not think the angels could tell the rest. I think if the archangel himself should come down from those starry heights, that the words of that angel would be inadequate to tell you the rest. God unloosed Big Jim's tongue, and he began to talk, and then the old men kissed him, and the old women kissed him, and the young men kissed him, and the young women kissed him, for the chief of sinners had been saved.

What is there wonderful about such a story? Not a thing on the face of the earth, if you will grant that Jesus Christ is divine, and that He came in the flesh to save sinners, and that His divine grace is mightier than any human sin, however long-continued and however heinous. O men and women, you and I limit God because of our unfaith with respect to aged and hardened and difficult and pre-occupied cases that are all around us.

How to Strengthen Faith

But there is another word for me to bring you. How may we strengthen our faith? That is what you and I wish to know. How may you and I strengthen our faith? I have two or three simple suggestions. First, if we would strengthen our faith, we need to make it a matter of prayer. I read you the passage of Scripture telling of a group of men who failed in their faith, and when they got Jesus alone they said: "Why was it we failed?" Mark His answer: "This kind can come forth by nothing, but by prayer." If you are not a man of prayer, you are not a man of faith. If you are not a woman of prayer you are not a woman of faith. The men and women who do not tread the secret path of prayer are men and women spiritless and broken and without faith. If you and I would have conquering faith, than you and I must make it a matter of constant prayer.

Once when Jesus gave His disciples a great task to accomplish, they cried back unto Him: "Lord, if you expect that of us, increase our faith." And so you and I are to come to Him, saying: "If you expect this, or that, or the other great achievement, even the achievement of winning some poor soul, bedarkened and blinded by sin, away from such dreadful path, to God, then increase our faith."

How may our faith be increased? If it is to be increased, then let us plead the promises of God. Oh, how great a privilege to plead the promises of God! Of old, one had a way of talking to God like this: "Do as thou hast said." And when you and I come to pray, we need to fill our mouths with arguments to God, and those arguments are His own promises. "Lord Jesus, here is what thou hast said, and we plead that. We fill our mouth with thine own argument, and we plead that before thy face. Do as thou hast said. Do as thou hast said."

What if hundreds and hundreds of these men and women before me, should go apart in groups of two, and should say: "Lord Jesus, here is a case, O, so difficult, speaking after the fashion of men, so difficult, so hopeless, but not at all difficult and hopeless if God will take charge of the case, and, therefore, we two take up thy promise, where thou sayest: 'If two of you shall agree on earth, as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father in heaven.' Do as thou hast said. We plead this promise, and rest on it. Do as thou hast said."

How are we to strengthen our faith? I have still another word. If we are to strengthen our faith, then we are to seek the guidance and power of God's divine Spirit.

In this divinest work of all, the work of winning souls to Christ, all along we are to seek the guidance and power of the Holy Spirit. Oh, how wonderful is His guidance, and how marvelous is His power! He does guide His people. There is such a thing as being led of the Spirit of God, and this divinest work of all, the work of winning souls, we shall miss it utterly and be marplots, if we are not guided and empowered by the Spirit of God. The Spirit of God does teach, guide and empower the servants of Jesus, in this holiest task of all, this work of winning souls to Christ. "When He is come," Jesus has promised it, "He will guide you into all truth." "Ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me, both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth." O brothers mine, you and I, with all humility and earnestness, want to ask God to guide us in this work we are in, and to give us His own wisdom and power at every step that we take.

Come, Holy Spirit, heavenly dove,
With all thy quickening powers;
Come, shed abroad a Saviour's love,
And that shall kindle ours.

You and I want the guidance and the power of the divine Spirit in this heavenly task to which we are these days, please God, to put our hands.

The Holy Spirit Goes With Our Faith

Wonderful, how wonderful, is God's leadership by His Spirit and His power, when we yield ourselves to Him! How wonderful it is! A few years ago, I was in Minneapolis, that beautiful city of the Northwest, at one of the Bible conferences for the Northwestern states, speaking there daily for some two weeks, and it was my privilege, while there, to have daily fellowship with that nobly gifted preacher, Wayland Hoyt, one of the first preachers of his generation. I had heard of an incident in his life, and I asked him about it, and he confirmed it. This was the incident: Dr. Hoyt had prepared with unusual care in the other years a special sermon, hoping to reach one of the first citizens in his city on a certain Sunday night, with that same sermon. This citizen was an outstanding citizen, but not a Christian, and rarely came to church. The wife was a devoted Christian and church member. So at the Sunday morning service Mr. Hoyt signalled quietly to the wife, and sent by her a message to the distinguished husband: "Tell him that I ask specially that he will come to night. I have prepared a sermon, hoping earnestly to help him. Tell him I ask him to come, I wish him to come."

The wife gave the message when she reached home, and the husband went to the telephone—he was a gentleman in every instinct and habit of his life—and took down the receiver and called the minister and gave the minister his grateful thanks for his cordial invitation, saying: "Certainly, I will be there tonight. How kindly, how considerate of you to be so interested in me. Certainly, I will be there to hear you."

But before the nightfall came, a blinding storm filled the heavens, and the floods poured out of the clouds, and the people could not gather. Only a little handful hard by the church could gather at all. The minister made his way to the church and spoke to the little handful, but the one citizen he had thought about and specially prepared for was not there.

The minister went home with his heart heavy, and he sat there late and long in his library that Sunday night, and he fell to musing like this: "What a poor out I am making reaching that man!" And then something said to him: "Why don't you imitate your Master and go to the man and preach your sermon to just one man, as Jesus after nightfall preached His sermon on the new birth to

Nicodemus, that fine citizen of old? Why don't you walk in the steps of your Master and preach your best sermon to one man?"

And that suggestion fairly boomed like a cannon in his ears and heart. He looked at his watch. It was midnight. He said: "Why, I could not go this late at night." And he sat, still thinking further, and something seemed to say to him, did say to him: "If you knew that that man's house was in danger, or that his family were in danger, you would brave any sort of weather to help them. Though the storm beat down the avenue, you would breast it, to go and apprise him of the danger. Why won't you be consistent about the biggest, most important thing of all?"

And then Dr. Hoyt said he found himself putting on his raincoat. He opened the door and breasted the great storm that still swept down the avenue. Block after block he trudged his way through the blinding storm. He said he found himself talking to himself: "Maybe, the man will say I am crazy. Maybe I am, but God knows I am trying to do the consistent thing." Presently he came to the right house, and as he came toward it there was a light in one of the lower rooms, and he came up softly to the door, and knocked gently, not caring to disturb the household at one o'clock in the morning, and in a moment the door opened, and there standing was the citizen, who had not been in bed at all, and out into the storm and the night the big citizen thrust his arms and drew Wayland Hoyt out of the night and out of the storm, and drew him to his heart, and sobbed over him as a mother would sob over her children, saying to him: "Thank God, Mr. Hoyt, He sent you here to teach me how to be saved. I have been there in my library, reading the Bible and trying to pray. That word you sent me waked me up and stirred my heart. The storm kept me from going to church, but I could not sleep. I have been there reading the Bible and trying to pray, but it is all dark to me. Jesus sent you to teach me."

And Wayland Hoyt told me that in five minutes his interested citizen was rejoicing in Christ Jesus the Lord. What if Wayland Hoyt had not gone? God pity me and you maybe, as time and again your heart ached with a longing inexpressible for some lost soul, but you said: "I am unworthy. I am incompetent. I am unfit." And you deadened your impression, and went your way, and such soul went his way, and maybe has gone into eternity this Tuesday night. Oh, seek the guidance of God's Spirit for this task, and then follow Him!

We are going in a moment, for my message is done. I have a question to ask you, and you will answer it candidly. This is the question: Is there somebody in Fort Worth whom you wish to be saved? Is there somebody in Fort Worth whom you wish to be saved during these meetings, in which our appeal shall be made to men's judgments and men's consciences? I have no respect for any other kind of appeal in the name of Christ's holy religion. Bethink you now—is there somebody whom you wish to see saved during these midsummer days, set aside for special meetings to help the people in the highest matters of all? Every Christian present who says: "Yes; there is one, or there are some, that I wish to see saved, and by my standing I voice my wish, and ask you and ask others present who pray, to join me in prayer for these nameless ones that my heart thinks about, in these closing moments of this service," stand to your feet. Is there some person or persons whom you would see saved during these meetings, for whom you would have us to unite our prayers this night, and from day to day, that light and leading from God may be vouchsafed unto them that they may be saved? Does my call apply to others? Every man and woman who says: "That represents my heart's earnest desire," stand to your feet. Many have risen. Many persons are evidently now in your thoughts. The Lord teach us to pray for them as we ought!

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